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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine the real and potential contributions of teacher-aides to Ohio adult basic education (ABE) programs. The literature concerned with aides in ABE, consisting primarily of reports of inservice workshops, has focused on their functions and training needs. This study had four major purposes: (1) To provide demographic data on aides' education, ethnic background, experience, sex, age, and work setting, (2) to determine the nature and extent of specific instructional, clerical, and community relations activities performed by aides, (3) to determine how well aides were prepared to perform the functions important to their work, and by inference, their training needs, and (4) to examine the nature and quality of the working relationships between teachers and aides. A questionnaire based on the review of literature was field tested with 12 aides, revised, and mailed to 253 aides. Responses were received from 208 aides (82%). Personal interviews were conducted with 35 (16%) aides randomly selected from the respondents, with some adjustments made to insure geographical distribution. Findings are presented in five sections: Modalities of Partnership between Teachers and Aides, Demographic Data, Duties of Aides, Learning Needs of Aides, and Relationship with Teacher. Implications for both administrators and teachers are discussed. Appendixes include the questionnaire and interview guide. (WL)

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A STUDY OF TEACHER AIDES IN OHIO ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

by

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The Ohio State University

1976

in cooperation with
The Ohio Department of Education

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to determine the real and potential contributions of teacher-aides to Ohio adult basic education programs (ABE). As these programs increased in number and size since 1966 there were no models or sets of guidelines available to determine the role of the aide, other than those established for the K-12 setting. Hence a wide diversity in the utilization of aides has developed.

No current and comprehensive data have been available on their activities. For instance, "A Statewide Profile of Adult Basic Education," published in 1970 by the Ohio Department of Education, reported only that 71% of 365 teachers were assisted by aides. There was no further information about them.

The literature concerned with aides in ABE, consisting primarily of reports of in-service workshops, has focused on their functions and training needs. Little attention has been given to the important question of their relationship with teachers as partners in the instructional process.

Given the increasing emphasis on in-service training for all ABE staff and the growing recognition of aides' real and potential contribution to the success of ABE, it seemed reasonable and timely to learn more about their actual performance. This knowledge can serve as the basis for future planning in order to maximize their services in local programs.

The author is grateful to M. Marguerite Crowley for her assistance in completing this study.

QUESTIONS ADDRESSED IN THE STUDY

This study had four major purposes. First, it sought to provide demographic data on aides' education, ethnic background, experience, sex, age, and work setting. A second purpose was to determine the nature and extent of specific instructional, clerical, and community relations activities performed by aides. The third purpose was to determine how well aides were prepared to perform the functions important to their work, and by inference, their training needs. Fourth, the study sought to examine the nature and quality of the working relationships between teachers and aides.

In addition, selected demographic variables were statistically correlated with data on functions, training needs, and teacher/aide relationships to determine whether:

1. aides with more education would have more instructional duties than aides with less education;
2. being a former ABE or GED student would be correlated with students bringing problems and/or complaints to the aide instead of the teacher;
3. higher education levels for aides would be correlated with students bringing problems and/or complaints to the aide instead of the teacher;
4. aides' ratings of the importance of functions and their preparedness to perform them would reveal in-service training needs.

METHODOLOGY

Eighty ABE directors and coordinators who included aides in their fiscal year 1975 Program Application to the Ohio Department of Education provided names and addresses for 253 teacher-aides working in the state. A questionnaire based on the review of literature was field tested with 12 aides, revised, and then mailed to the 253 aides. The instrument was designed to obtain data in four categories: 1) demographic, including age, sex, ethnic background, education, number of years in ABE, work setting; 2) a check list of specific instructional, clerical, and community relations functions performed by the aides and percent of time devoted to each area; 3) assessment of importance to the job of 16 competencies and the aides' preparedness to perform them; and 4) aides' attitudes concerning their professional relationship with teachers.

Responses were received from two hundred and eight aides (82%). The high rate of response would seem to allow generalization of the findings to aides in other states to the extent that their demographic characteristics are similar to those of the subjects of this study.

In addition to the questionnaire, personal interviews were conducted with 35 (16%) aides randomly selected from the respondents, with some adjustments made to insure geographical distribution. The interviews were open ended, but structured to obtain additional insight into the aides' duties and their relationship with teachers.

FINDINGS

I. Modalities of Partnership Between Teachers and Teacher-Aides

It is apparent that the duties of teacher-aides vary from one program to the next, as does the nature of the professional partnership between teachers and aides. In attempting to understand and describe the complexity of these relationships, we have outlined four Modalities of Partnership. Although not all teacher and teacher-aide partnerships fit neatly into the four categories described, the evidence indicates that the Modalities represent an accurate account of the various ways in which teachers and teacher-aides interact in the performance of their respective duties.

In Modality #1, the teacher determines and directs all of the aide's functions. The aide exercises limited initiative and discretion. For example, the teacher will give assignments to her students and will direct the aide to correct the students' work as they finish, or the aide may be assigned to tutor a specific student or group of students. The duties assigned to the aide may be clerical or instructional in nature, but, in either case, as the aide completes the task, she seeks further instructions from the teacher. The aides interviewed who fit within this Modality see a clear distinction between their role and that of the teacher. They are comfortable within these limits and careful not to overstep them.

In Modality #2, aides are given more flexibility and self-direction. This partnership is characterized by teachers giving aides either: a) general directions to move throughout the learning center correcting work, tutoring, and making new assignments; or b) responsibility for a specific group of learners such as low level readers for whom the aide

selects materials, gives and corrects assignments, and evaluates progress. In either case the aide makes certain instructional decisions on her own, the limits of which are established by the teacher to whom the aide frequently refers for further directions.

In Modality #3, the aide has wide-ranging discretion with regard to instructional decisions for students. In some learning centers, illustrative of this modality, the teacher-aide has complete responsibility for testing, placing, instructing, and evaluating students. The teacher and aide may not be physically present at the same time together in the learning center. The aide will consult with the teacher or program director when she has problems or questions, and she is expected to attend in-service programs. Primary responsibility for the day to day operation of the learning center either rests with the aide or is shared with the teacher. An example of this Modality is a learning center in which the aide and teacher work together, but the teacher takes complete responsiblity for Reading and English instruction, while the aide directs the Mathematics component of the center.

Modality #4 is specifically characteristic of the homebound programs in which teacher aides, or paraprofessionals as they are often called, have complete responsibility for instruction, and often recruitment of students. There are a few homebound programs operating in cities but their setting is usually rural. In this situation, the teacher functions as a facilitator or resource person. Often, the teacher will conduct in-service workshops with aides, or meet with them on a regular basis to review materials and methods, and to discuss specific problems. The major distinguishing characteristic of this Modality is the fact that teachers interact with aides

only, never with the students.

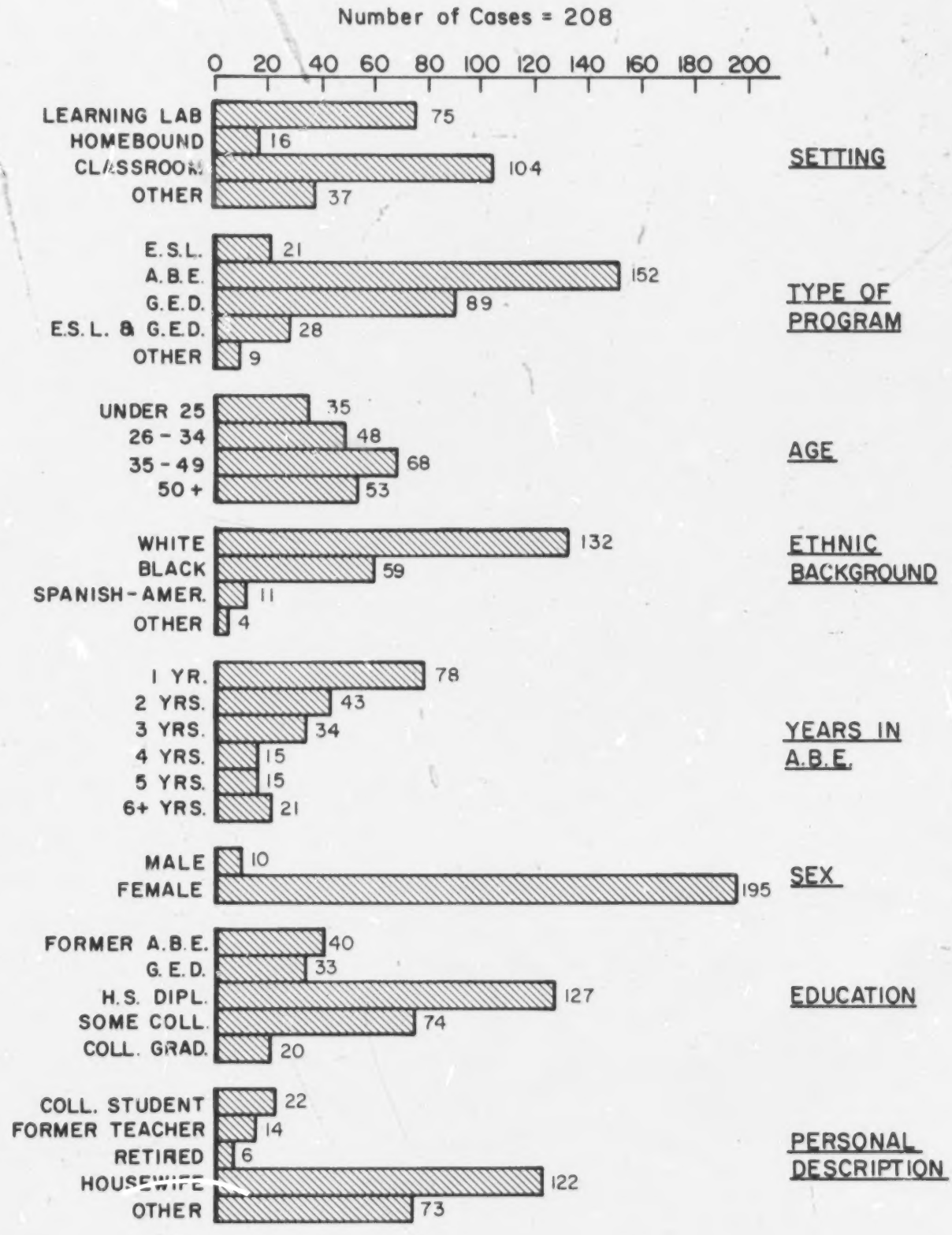
Generally, it was found that aides with greater flexibility and independence had greater interest in further professional training and the desire to expand their instructional involvement. The aides also recognize their own weaknesses, primarily their lack of instructional experience and their limited understanding of more advanced subject matter. However, they are most willing to work to overcome these deficiencies.

II. Demographic Data

An analysis of Figure 1 reveals that the typical aide in Ohio A.B.E. programs is a white female housewife, employed part-time, has a high school diploma and/or has attended some college, has been an aide for one or two years. is thirty-five years of age or older, is concerned primarily with A.B.E. students as distinguished from E.S.L. or G.E.D., and works in a classroom setting as opposed to a learning lab. Much of the instruction in classroom settings, however, is on an individualized basis.

In addition to identifying themselves as housewives, college students, former teachers and retired persons, aides listed current activities in many other fields. For example, 27 respondents are educational aides in other programs such as Title I, special education, school libraries, and elementary education; 15 have other occupations such as beauticians, domestics, factory employees, and office workers; 18 others indicates such roles as substitute teacher, volunteer in church or community, child care aide, private music instructor, interpreter, and media specialist. This indicates that aides bring to their work rich and diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Thirty-seven (18%) of the responses to the question of primary work setting, in addition to learning lab, homebound program or classroom,



DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Figure 1

included diverse responsibilities such as individual tutoring, office work, grading papers, materials preparation, recruitment, babysitting, monitoring G.E.D. tests, receiving new students, and a variety of housekeeping chores.

Only 73 (35%) of the respondents indicated they were former A.B.E. or G.E.D. students in contrast to 127 (61.4%) who have a high school diploma and 74 (35.7%) who attended some college. Clearly aides in Ohio A.B.E. programs have higher levels of educational experiences than might have been predicted. Fourteen aides are former teachers.

III. Duties of Aides

The literature is the most explicit concerning duties of teacher aides. These generally fall into three categories: instructional, clerical, community relations. Respondents checked only those duties which they perform. The duties are arranged in descending order of frequency in Tables 2, 3, and 4.

Aides were also asked to estimate the percent of their working time devoted to instructional, clerical and community relations activities. The data are summarized in Table 1.

The evidence from Table 1 and Table 2 indicates a substantial amount of effort expended by teacher aides directly in instructional functions. Viewed in another light the data show that only 2.7% of aides spend none of their time this way. Clerical duties are very much a part of a teacher-aide's duties regardless of the Modality which characterizes her partnership with the teacher. The degree to which clerical duties consume her time, however, is less than may have been anticipated. Thirteen percent of aides spend none of their time on clerical duties while 91% of them

spend 50% or less of their time this way. Last in order of importance of time consumed was given to formal community relations activities. Thirty-eight percent of aides spend none of their time on such duties as defined by the study. Even more surprising was that 62% of aides spend 5% or less of their time performing such functions.

Table 1 Percentage of Time Spent on Instructional, Clerical, or Community Relations Activities

	MEAN %	MEDIAN %	MODE %
INSTRUCTIONAL	66.092	74.895	80.00
CLERICAL	23.151	16.00	10.00
COMMUNITY RELATIONS	10.757	4.774	0.00

Table 2 Instructional Duties

Duty	Number	% of Total
1. Meet with teacher to discuss students' work and progress	143	75.3%
2. Tutor individual students	138	72.6%
3. Attend in-service workshops	137	72.1%
4. Instruct small groups of students	124	65.3%
5. Select programmed materials for individual students	116	61.1%
6. Administer and score placement tests	115	60.5%
7. Work with teacher in preparing lessons for individual students	108	56.8%
8. Evaluate student progress	101	53.2%
9. Instruct non-English speaking students	69	36.3%
10. Act as a group discussion leader with students	66	34.7%
11. Work with teacher in preparing lessons for groups	63	33.2%
12. Organize and attend field trips	17	8.9%
13. Other	16	8.4%

Table 3 Clerical Duties

Duty		Number	% of Total
1.	Keep student attendance records	136	71.6%
2.	Interview new students and explain the program	113	59.5%
3.	Perform general housekeeping duties	106	55.8%
4.	Prepare refreshments	93	48.9%
5.	Operate A - V equipment	82	43.2%
6.	Compile student progress reports	61	32.1%
7.	Type forms, reports, etc.	61	32.1%
8.	Maintain A-V equipment	34	17.9%
9.	Other	25	13.2%

Table 4 Community Relations Duties

Community Relations Duties		Number	% of Total
1.	Recruit new students	80	42.1%
2.	Refer students to social service agencies	51	26.8%
3.	Visit students at home to check on reasons for absenteeism, family problems, etc.	45	23.7%
4.	Explain ABE program to non-English speaking students	42	22.1%
5.	Explain ABE program to groups in the community	34	17.9%
6.	Babysit for children while adults attend ABE program	23	12.1%
7.	Other	17	8.9%
8.	Accompany students to social service agencies	13	6.8%

IV. Learning Needs of Aides

Aides were asked to rate each of sixteen functions first according to its importance for their jobs and second according to their preparedness to do the function (see Appendix I, Section C). Each rating was on a scale of five to one, five being "Very Important" and "Well Prepared," one being "Little Importance" and "Poorly Prepared." The functions are listed in Table 5 according to mean scores of "importance" in descending order. The mean scores of "preparedness" are listed in Table 6 in descending order. Correlations between importance and preparedness were computed for each of the sixteen functions using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. In no case was the coefficient less than 0.6221. This indicates a very high correlation between aides' perceptions of the importance of functions and their preparedness to do them. Hence, no significant training needs emerge from this statistical analysis.

It can be safely concluded that aides feel prepared for what they are asked to do. In fact, aides gave a higher "preparedness" than "importance" rating for seven of the functions. These were:

Ability to interview new students and explain the program	FIGURE 2
Ability to administer and score placement tests	FIGURE 2
Ability to act as a group discussion leader	FIGURE 3
Ability to organize field trips	FIGURE 3
Ability to counsel student with personal problems	FIGURE 4
Ability to keep student records	FIGURE 4
Ability to teach small groups of students	FIGURE 4

It can also be inferred that if functions which have a low mean "importance" rating (e.g. Knowledge of agencies and contact persons to whom

Table 5

IMPORTANCE OF FUNCTIONS TO AIDES' JOB

Ranked according to mean scores: Very Important 5 4 3 2 1 Little Importance

IMPORTANCE Mean Scores	PREPAREDNESS Mean Scores	FUNCTION
4.28	4.48	Ability to keep student records
4.27	4.03	Ability to identify programmed or self-instruction materials
4.254	4.18	Ability to tutor students
4.251	4.09	Understanding of how to use programmed instruction materials
4.11	4.17	Ability to teach small groups of students
4.10	4.27	Ability to interview new students and explain the program
3.93	3.83	Ability to evaluate student progress
3.90	3.80	Ability to score and interpret tests in programmed instruction materials
3.89	3.99	Ability to administer and score placement tests
3.79	3.67	Ability to interpret placement tests
3.35	3.49	Ability to counsel students with personal problems
3.283	3.23	Ability to write individual learning prescriptions
3.281	3.48	Ability to act as a group discussion leader
3.24	3.05	Knowledge of agencies and contact persons to whom ABE students can be sent for special services
2.91	2.59	Ability to instruct non-English speaking students
2.05	2.68	Ability to organize field trips

Table 6

PREPAREDNESS OF AIDES TO PERFORM FUNCTIONS

Ranked according to mean scores: Very Important 5 4 3 2 1 Little Importance

PREPAREDNESS Mean Scores	IMPORTANCE Mean Scores	FUNCTION
4.48	4.28	Ability to keep student records
4.27	4.10	Ability to interview new students and explain the program
4.18	4.25	Ability to tutor students
4.17	4.11	Ability to teach small groups of students
4.09	4.25	Understanding of how to use programmed instruction materials
4.03	4.27	Ability to identify programmed or self-instruction materials
3.99	3.89	Ability to administer and score placement tests
3.83	3.93	Ability to evaluate student progress
3.80	3.90	Ability to score and interpret tests in programmed instruction materials
3.67	3.78	Ability to interpret placement tests
3.49	3.35	Ability to counsel students with personal problems
3.48	3.28	Ability to act as a group discussion leader
3.23	3.28	Ability to write individual learning prescriptions
3.05	3.24	Knowledge of agencies and contact persons to whom ABE students can be sent for special services
2.68	2.05	Ability to organize field trips
2.59	2.91	Ability to instruct non-English speaking students

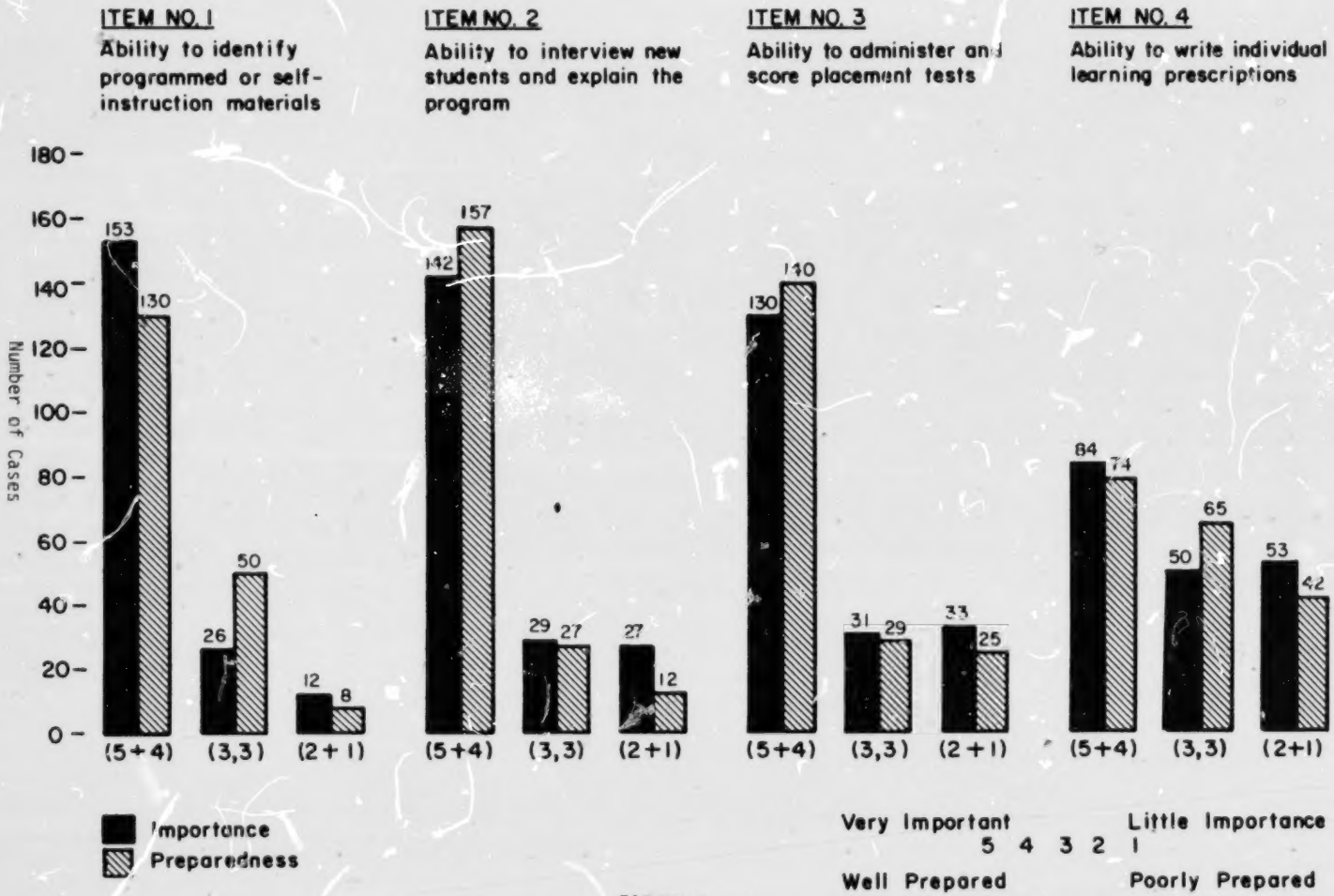


FIGURE 2
Aides' Self-Assessment in Relation to Functions

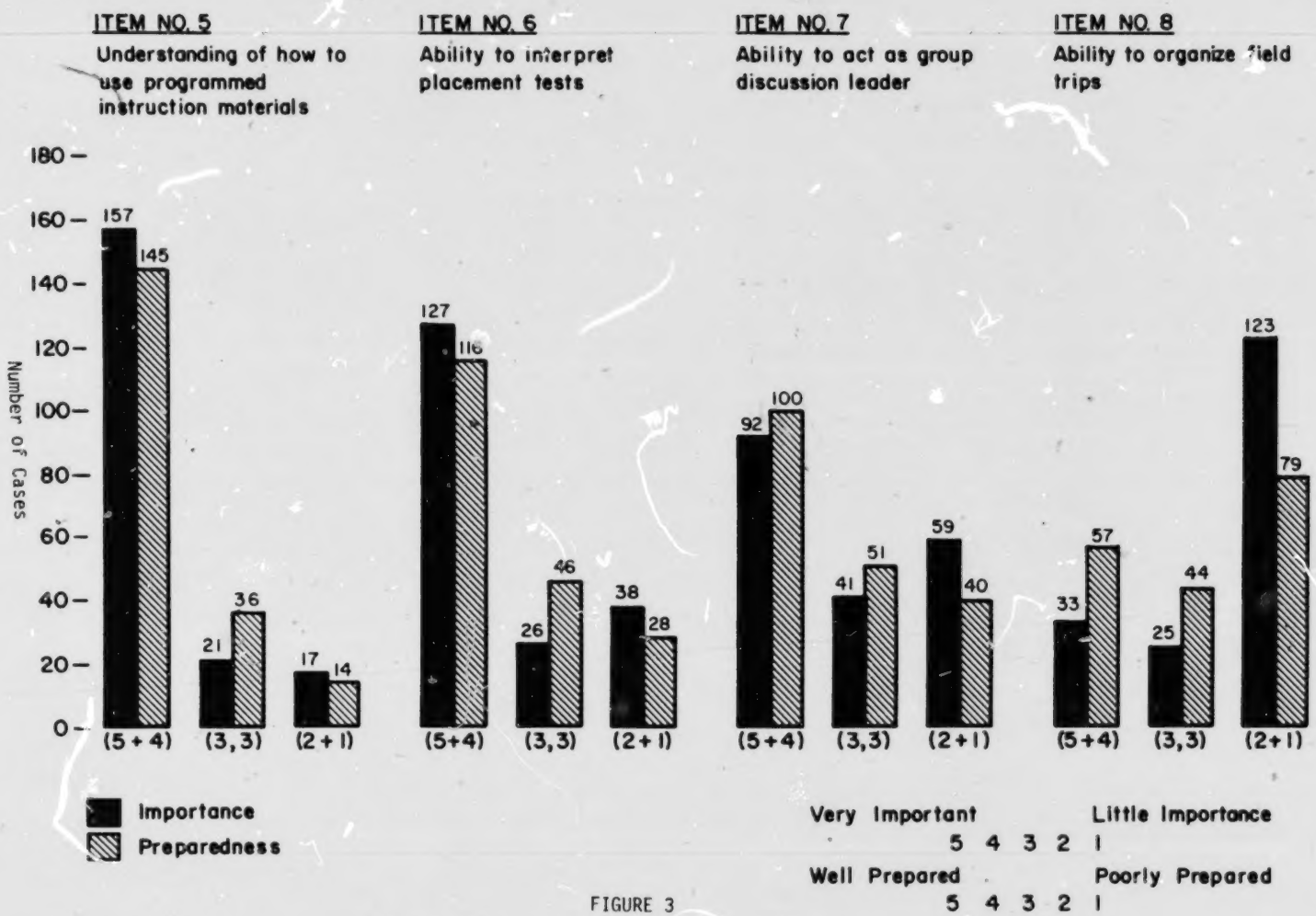


FIGURE 3

Aides' Self-Assessment in Relation to Functions

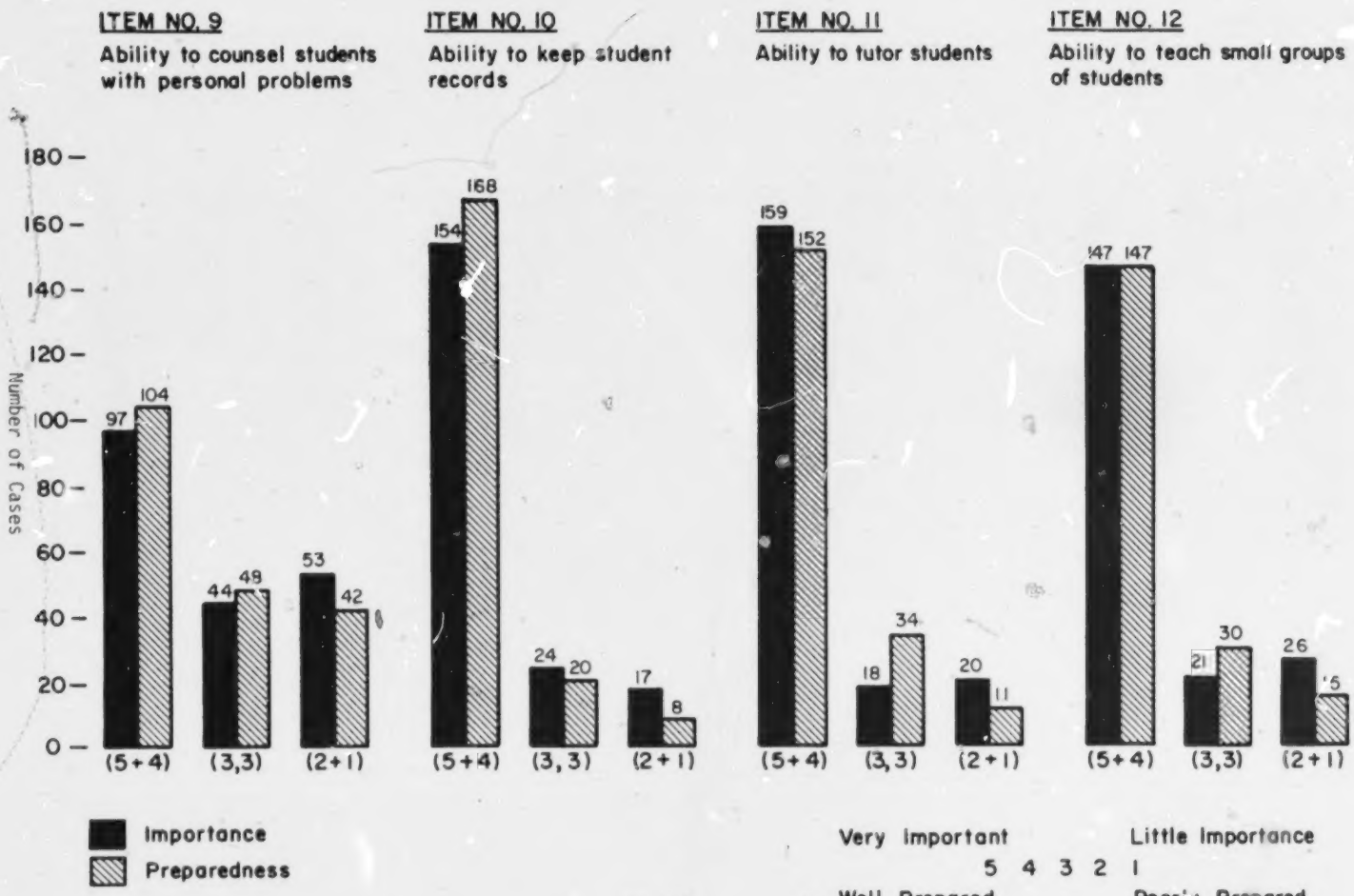


FIGURE 4
Aides' Self-Assessment in Relation to Functions

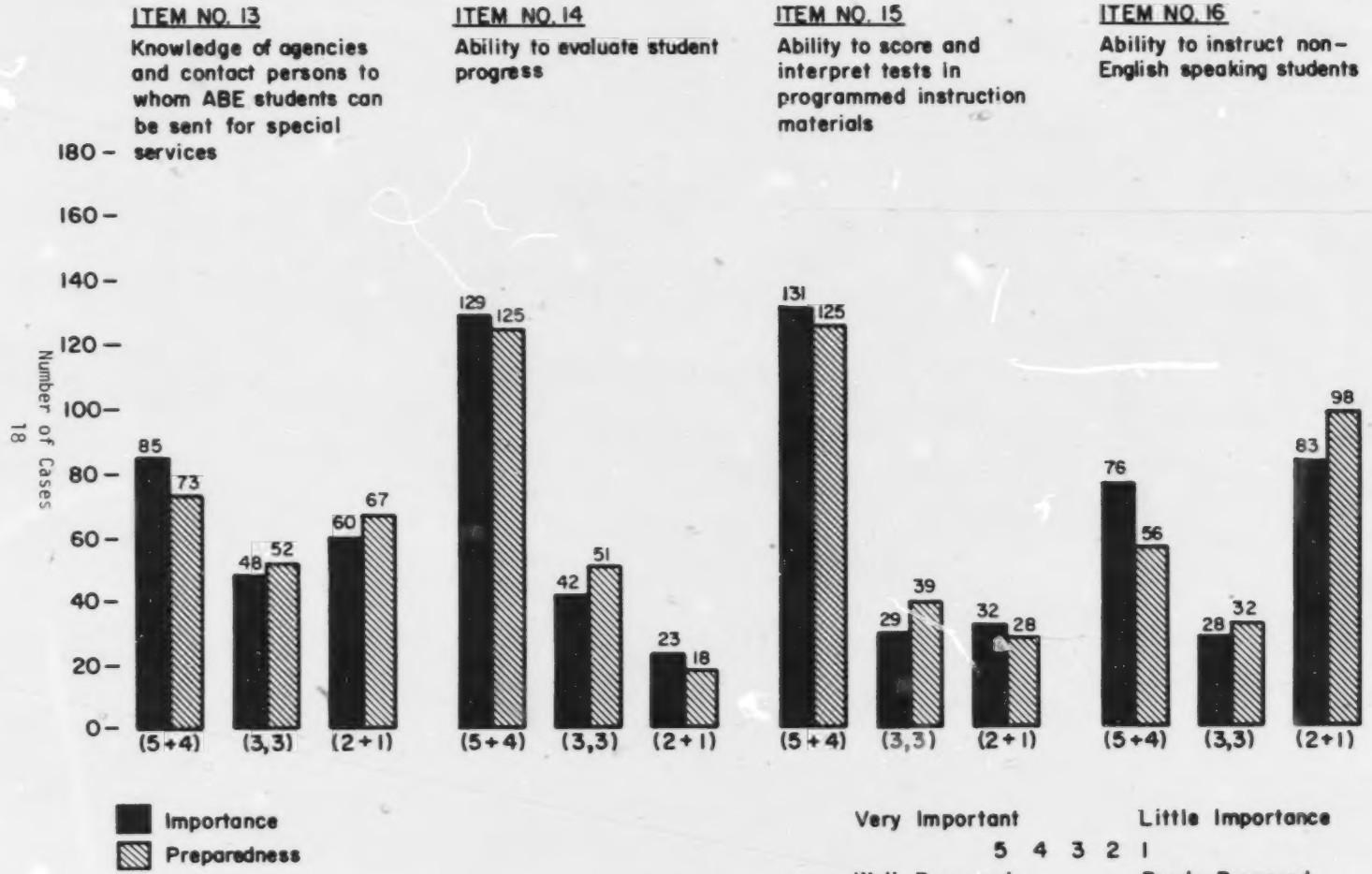


FIGURE 5
Aides' Self-Assessment in Relation to Functions

students can be referred and Ability to organize field trips) take on greater importance to the job this would indicate a need for further training.

The interviews confirmed aides' confidence in their preparedness to function effectively. However, aides consistently expressed a desire to know more about the functions they perform in adult basic education. This was particularly true of aides whose partnerships with teachers is characterized by Modalities Three and Four. Usually this desire for further training was in reference to teaching Reading and Math to higher level students.

Concerning in-service the interviews revealed that aides:

--faithfully attend what is available to them

--complained of insufficient advance notification of in-service activities

--are provided with little training that is either specifically for them or for teacher/aide teams

--desire college credit for learning obtained through in-service

--desire more education if it's useful to their work

--have insufficient opportunities to continue their education while working.

When the four Modalities of Partnership with teachers are viewed as a career ladder requiring increasing levels of skill this has obvious implications for training. If aides with competencies characteristic of Modality One are to contribute more to the instructional mission of ABE, further training will be necessary. Furthermore, teachers and aides will need to learn to work together more on a partnership basis. This can be facilitated by in-service planned for teacher and aide teams. Clear definitions of teacher-aides's roles may assist the formation of effective teacher and aide partnerships.

V. Relationship with Teacher

Four factors important to the relationship between aides and teachers emerge from the data obtained by the survey instrument and the interviews.

First, one is struck by the overwhelmingly positive nature of the relationship between aides and teachers. Statements 1, 8 and 9 (Table 7) were designed to assess the professional nature of that relationship. Seventy-one percent indicated they always or frequently take time to explain aspects of their work. Nearly 89% indicated their job always or frequently allows them to learn from the teacher so as to assume more independent responsibility. On the contrary, 72% indicated in statement 3 that the teacher seldom or never has a problem finding things for them to do. Another 13% said this statement was not applicable to their situation. Furthermore 74% stated that seldom or never do they need to guess what the teacher wants them to do. Another 11% said this was not applicable to them. From a personal standpoint aides are equally positive about their work. Over 88% said they always get along with the teacher. In response to statement 12 only 13.5% indicated they always or frequently have to help solve problems between teachers and students.

Second, aides are quite pleased with and proud of functioning as a bridge between students and the adult basic education program. While only 41.6% of aides said students always or frequently bring problems or complaints to them instead of the teacher, our interviews revealed they perform very important services for students. These services include sewing buttons on shirts, getting extra food at holiday time, personal counseling when a family member is ill or in trouble, and moral support as the GED test approaches. Interestingly enough, our working hypotheses were not satisti-

cally substantiated. We had hypothesized that:

1. Aides with more education would have more instructional duties than aides with less education;
2. Being a former ABE or GED student would be correlated with students bringing problems and/or complaints to the aide instead of the instructor;
3. Higher educational levels for aides would be correlated with students bringing problems and/or complaints to the aide instead of the teacher.

None of these correlations provided to be statistically significant. What appears to be most pertinent in the aide/student relationship (hypotheses 2 and 3) are nebulous qualities of personality and attitude. That is, aides are able to relate well with students so students are inclined to trust and rely on them. From aides' viewpoint students see them as more on their level and more approachable than teachers. Fifty-two and four-tenths percent said that teachers rely on them to help in understanding what students are thinking and saying. This may in part be a function of availability. Because teachers have instructional responsibilities for all students they may be less available to give individual attention to student's personal as well as learning problems.

Table 7 Relationship with Teacher
N=208

1. The teacher and I plan ahead of time what I should do to help students learn.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	62	86	23	4	26
% of total	29.8	41.3	11.1	1.9	12.5

7 missing

2. Our ABE coordinator decides what my duties are.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	77	49	39	21	15
% of total	37.0	23.6	18.8	10.1	7.2

7 missing

3. The teacher has a problem finding things for me to do.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	1	3	29	142	27
% of total	0.5	1.4	13.9	68.3	13.0

6 missing

4. Students bring problems and/or complaints to me instead of the teacher.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	8	66	65	32	30
% of total	3.8	31.7	31.3	15.4	14.4

7 missing

5. The teacher allows me to do whatever I enjoy most.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	28	84	14	11	62
% of total	13.5	40.4	6.7	5.3	29.8

9 missing

6. The teacher relies on me to help her understand what students are thinking and saying.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	22	87	42	14	36
% of total	10.6	41.8	20.2	6.7	17.3

7 missing

7. I relieve the teacher by doing things which she/he doesn't enjoy.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	2	23	43	70	64
% of total	1.0	11.1	20.7	33.7	30.8

6 missing

8. The teacher takes time to explain what I need to do in my work.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	77	64	26	5	28
% of total	37.0	30.8	12.5	2.4	13.5

8 missing

Table 7 continued

9. My job allows me to learn from the teacher so that I am prepared to do many tasks on my own.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	84	84	9	1	23
% of total	40.4	40.4	4.3	0.5	11.1

7 missing

10. The teacher and I get along well together.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	183	11	0	0	7
% of total	88.0	5.3	0.0	0.0	3.4

7 missing

11. I must guess what the teacher wants me to do.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	3	1	52	123	23
% of total	1.4	0.5	25.0	59.1	11.1

6 missing

12. I help solve problems which come up between the teacher and students.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	5	23	48	59	67
% of total	2.4	11.1	23.1	28.4	32.2

6 missing

13. I am asked to work with more than one teacher during a year.

	Always	Frequently	Seldom	Never	Not Applicable
# of responses	39	38	28	60	37
% of total	18.8	18.3	13.5	28.8	17.8

6 missing

IMPLICATIONS

The data have implications for both administrators and teachers. Some of the implications have a philosophical and policy dimension while others are more pragmatic and immediate.

The Modalities of Partnership between Teachers and Aides provide administrators with a tool to analyze how best to use aides. What kind of partnerships and how many aides in each Modality make the most sense are questions whose answers will vary from one program to another and from one setting to another within the same program.

There are obvious implications for selection and training if an administrator wants aides to function more as equal partners with teachers in the instructional process. Increasing aides' involvement in instruction may have both financial and political ramifications which should be anticipated.

Those functions of aides with a mean "importance" rating below 3.5 were perceived as less important than others. These were:

--Ability to write individual learning prescriptions.	FIGURE 2
--Ability to act as a group discussion leader.	FIGURE 3
--Ability to organize field trips.	FIGURE 3
--Ability to counsel students with personal problems.	FIGURE 4
--Knowledge of agencies and contact persons to whom ABE students can be sent for special services.	FIGURE 5
--Ability to instruct non-English speaking students	FIGURE 5

Is this perception consistent with the importance attached to these functions by those who manage the program? Should aides be given increased responsibility for such activities? Since aides' "preparedness" scores for these functions

also were correspondingly low, increased responsibilities in these areas have obvious implications for training. Again, these decisions will vary from one program to another.

Since the role of teachers is different from one Modality to the next it cannot be assumed that every teacher can or wants to have aides working on a more equal partnership b sis. The formation of such partnerships can certainly be facilitated by in-service training for that purpose. Perhaps the opportunity to witness effective models of partnership would be a useful learning method for both teachers and aides. Aides need to be involved in the planning of in-service training, and at the very least, given sufficient advance notification of when it will be held.

It is obvious that both aides and teachers bring their own special talents to the ABE program, and that the successful program will be the one that maximizes the effectiveness of each member of the aide-teacher team. For example, because of the aides' closeness to the students, they can give important feedback to both teachers and supervisors concerning the students' feelings about the program. A teacher who learns to seek and use this information in planning both curriculum and program structure will undoubtedly enhance the relevancy and effectiveness of that program.

Using aides as teachers, especially in homebound programs, encourages many students into the program who would otherwise be too timid to enter, or who might never know of the program's existence. Being enrolled is not sufficient for these students, however. It is equally important that their teachers, the aides, be both supportive and effective, and therein lies the importance of the professional teacher. She is the one who can enable the aides to fully understand the subject matter they must teach, and to adapt the various

materials and teaching techniques at hand to particular situations as effectively as possible.

In a handbook for aides working in the elementary and secondary setting, Brotherson and Johnson * discuss some of the ways in which the presence of an aide enables the professional teacher to expand her role to include not only her particular classroom, but the entire educational community of which she is a part. They list activities such as curriculum development and attendance at conferences and workshops. This same principle can be applied to ABE. The expanded role of the professional teacher could include the above mentioned activities as well as working with community groups or organizations such as merchants, cultural centers, and libraries to acquaint them with ABE and perhaps actively involve them in the program.

Despite the increased use of aides at all educational levels, the development of the skills necessary to work effectively with aides or volunteers is not generally included in the curriculum of teacher education colleges. It is an important aspect of the evolving role of the professional teacher, however, and needs to be addressed by these institutions. At the present time, adult basic education is rarely considered as a viable option for which future teachers can prepare. This also is an issue which must be considered by those concerned with preparing teachers for the coming generations. Most importantly, however, the training of aides to perform instructional duties, whether in ABE or in the traditional elementary school, serves to emphasize the need to prepare teachers to assume an ever expanding and changing professional role. It is no longer sufficient for any successful teacher to perform simply as a giver of information. All teachers, including those working in ABE, must be prepared to adjust to a changing system, whether that change is caused by the

*Mary Lou Brotherson and Mary Ann Johnson. Teacher Aide Handbook, Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1971.

involvement of a paraprofessional, the introduction of technical devices which affect the teaching process, or any other of the inevitable but unknown changes that will occur within education in the coming years.

Another implication of the growing involvement of aides in ABE is the need to establish a way by which aides, as they further their own education and assume greater instructional responsibility, should receive recognition for their work, both in terms of credit for courses or workshops attended and increases in salary. Many of the aides interviewed were very eager to take classes, workshops. Some wanted to pursue a degree, provided that these classes pertained to their jobs as aides in the ABE program. Viewing the four Modalities discussed above as a type of "career ladder" through which the aides could progress as they attended classes and workshops would be one way to approach the question of advancement. Involving the teachers directly in that training process would be an effective and sensible use of the talent at hand.

The success of the adult basic education program and the evolution of the aide-teacher team in ABE has implications extending beyond the learning lab into the educational community in general. Much has been written about the positive effect of the learning environment of ABE programs on the psychological security and academic success of students. Individualized instruction, active involvement of the learner, the non-threatening atmosphere have all contributed to the acceptance and success of ABE. Such developments have had some effect on those who design and implement educational programs on the elementary and secondary levels. It is hoped that the evolving team interaction between aide and teacher in many ABE programs will not go unnoticed by those in other educational institutions. It is apparent that aides need not be used solely

as record keepers, paper graders, or babysitters. Their potential contributions to the education of both children and adults are great, and just waiting to be used.

These are but some of the possible directions in which the roles of both teacher and aide in the ABE program can develop. With a creative eye to the future and a willingness to explore untried approaches to learning, the ABE community will continue to grow and achieve the kind of success that has already hailed it as an important innovative force in the educational community at large.

Whatever functions and responsibilities are performed by aides it is clear from the study that their contributions to ABE programs are indeed significant. It seems also clear that, while there are no clear and universally accepted models for the utilization of aides, the nature of their contributions need not evolve haphazardly.

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER AIDES
IN
OHIO ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Section A. PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Mark the appropriate response with an (X). For some questions you may want to mark more than one response.

I work primarily in:

_____ Learning Lab

_____ Homebound Program

_____ Classroom (group instruction)

_____ Other (specify) _____

The program is primarily:

_____ E.S.L.

_____ A.B.E.

_____ G.E.D.

_____ E.S.L. and A.B.E.

_____ Other _____

My age is:

_____ under 25 _____ 26-34 _____ 35-49 _____ 50 or older

My Ethnic Background is:

_____ White

_____ Black

_____ Spanish-American

_____ Other _____

In A.B.E. I am employed:

_____ part-time (less than 20 hrs. per week)

_____ full-time (more than 20 hrs. per week)

_____ without pay

Number of years as A.B.E. teacher aide:

_____ 1 year or less _____ 4 years

_____ 2 years _____ 5 years

_____ 3 years _____ 6 years or more

Education: (check all that apply)

_____ Former A.B.E. student

_____ Have G.E.D.

_____ Have High School Diploma

_____ Attended some college

_____ College Graduate

I am a:

_____ college student
_____ former teacher
_____ retired person
_____ housewife
_____ other _____

Sex:

_____ male _____ female

Section B. DUTIES OF TEACHER AIDES

Three categories of duties are listed: I. Instructional, II. Clerical, and III. Community Relations. Not all aides have duties in every category.

I. Instructional Duties: if you are involved in Instruction mark with an (X) those activities which you perform. Skip any activities which you do not perform.

_____ select programmed materials for individual students
_____ instruct small groups of students
_____ act as a group discussion leader with students
_____ organize and attend field trips
_____ tutor individual students
_____ instruct non-English speaking students
_____ meet with teacher to discuss student's work and progress
_____ attend in-service workshops
_____ work with teacher in preparing lessons for individual students
_____ evaluate student progress
_____ work with teacher in preparing lessons for groups
_____ administer and score placement tests
_____ other (explain) _____

II. Clerical Duties: if you have Clerical duties mark with an (X) those activities which you perform. Skip any activities which you do not perform.

_____ keep student attendance records
_____ interview new students and explain program
_____ maintain audio-visual equipment
_____ operate audio-visual equipment
_____ compile student progress reports
_____ type forms, reports, etc.
_____ prepare refreshments
_____ perform general housekeeping duties in the classroom
_____ other (explain) _____

III. Community Relations: if you have duties in the area of Community Relations mark with an (X) those activities which you perform. Skip any activities which you do not perform.

_____ visit students at home to check on reasons for absenteeism, family problems, health problems, etc.
_____ recruit new students
_____ refer students to other social service agencies
_____ explain ABE program to non-English speaking persons
_____ accompany students to social service agencies
_____ explain ABE program to groups in the community
_____ babysit for children while adults attend ABE program
_____ other (explain) _____

IV. Estimate the percent of your working time you devote to each of the following areas. The total should equal 100 %.

_____ % Instructional Activities
_____ % Clerical Activities
_____ % Community Relations Activities

100% Total

Section C. SELF ASSESSMENT

Following is a list of competency statements. Rate each competency statement twice:
(A) Its importance to your job as a teacher aide. (B) How well you are prepared to do it.

Use this scale in the first rating, importance to your job (A). Circle your rating.

Very Important — Little Importance

5 4 3 2 1

Use this scale in the second rating, how well you are prepared to do it (B). Circle your rating.

Well Prepared — Poorly Prepared

5 4 3 2 1

Please respond to all items!

A. Importance to Your Job		B. How well you are prepared to do it.
Very 5 4 3 2 1 Little	Ability to identify programmed or self-instruction materials	Well 5 4 3 2 1 Poorly
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to interview new students and explain the program	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to administer and score placement tests	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to write individual learning prescriptions	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Understanding of how to use programmed instruction materials	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to interpret placement tests	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to act as a group discussion leader	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to organize field trips	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to counsel students with personal problems	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to keep student records	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to tutor students	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to teach small groups of students	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Knowledge of agencies and contact persons to whom ABE students can be sent for special services	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to evaluate student progress	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to score and interpret tests in programmed instruction materials	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Ability to instruct non-English speaking students	5 4 3 2 1

BE SURE YOU HAVE RATED EACH COMPETENCY STATEMENT TWICE.

Section D. RELATIONSHIP WITH TEACHER

Check the word following each statement which best describes how you and the teacher work together.

1. The teacher and I plan ahead of time what I should do to help students learn.

   Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

2. Our ABE coordinator decides what my duties are.

   Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

3. The teacher has a problem finding things for me to do.

   Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

4. Students bring problems and/or complaints to me instead of the teacher.

   Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

5. The teacher allows me to do whatever I enjoy most.

   Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

6. The teacher relies on me to help her understand what students are thinking and saying.

   Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

7. I relieve the teacher by doing things which she/he doesn't enjoy.

   Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

8. The teacher takes time to explain what I need to do in my work.

   Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

9. My job allows me to learn from the teacher so that I am prepared to do many tasks on my own.

   Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

10. The teacher and I get along well together.

    Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

11. I must guess what the teacher wants me to do.

    Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

12. I help solve problems which come up between the teacher and students.

    Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

13. I am asked to work with more than one teacher during a year.

    Always _____ Frequently _____ Seldom _____ Never _____ Not Applicable _____

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE USED WITH TEACHER AIDES

General Questions

1. How much explaining about the program do you do to new students; do you use a form in this interview; what is done with the information when you are finished?

2. Do you give the tests and score and interpret the results; can you tell me what are some of the tests that you use with new students to place them?

3. Do you write learning prescriptions for students on your own; or is this something that you and the teacher do together?

4. Do you act as a group discussion leader or do you get involved in teaching groups of students in your job?

5. What are some agencies that you send students to and for what purposes?

6. If you work with more than one teacher, is it easier working with one than another and why is that the case?

7. Have you been working in the program longer than the teacher that you work with? Were you ever an ABE student or a GED student in the program where you now work?

8. Are there activities or things in your job that you would like to be able to do but which you are not allowed to do? Did you attend any kind of in-service workshop or conference during the year and did you attend any pre-service workshop before you began this job?

9. What kind of in-service did you have in the past year? What specifically did you attend? Did you participate in in-service with the teacher or on your own or with other aides? Did you get paid for attending? Was there any college credit attached to what you attended? Do you feel a need for more in-service or less?

Teacher/Aide Relationship

1. Do you receive on-the-job training from the teachers that you work with? Do you spend time with the teacher each day or frequently discuss student progress and/or problems? Do you work primarily with individual students or with groups of them? Do you feel you are being used as well as you might be in the program or are there things that you would like to do which you haven't had the opportunity to do?

2. Are you in charge of instruction for individuals or groups at any time? Do you have the sole responsibility for instruction for any students? Do you feel equipped to do this? Do you feel this should be part of you job?

3. Do students have personal problems which they bring to you for which you must give advice? Do you feel qualified or competent to do this kind of counseling?

4. After your experiences as an aide, would you want to be an ABE teacher? Do you think you are learning from the teacher on the job?

5. Do you and the teacher have a good partnership?

6. Do you and the teacher agree on what your duties are supposed to be or is there a difference of opinion about your responsibilities?

7. Do students feel more comfortable talking to you instead of the teacher?

The Program

1. What do you think this program is accomplishing for the people who attend?

2. Why don't more people attend?

3. What would you suggest the program do to reach more of the people who don't come?

4. Are you ever involved in decisions or asked about how to recruit more students or what some of the problems are that students have in getting to the classes?

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